



The Talking Stick

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide exemplary programs that challenge and inspire all learners to become reflective, caring, and responsible citizens. We are committed to fostering a safe school community in which diversity is respected, and learners are encouraged to achieve their full potential.

HIGHLIGHTS

Check out our new Web Page for information and important links: <http://www.sd43.bc.ca/Programs/AboriginalEd/Pages/default.aspx>

Also new this year, we have the Parent Consultation form available on line. Please visit our webpage and select Parent Consultation Form (green sheet), complete one for each of your children and hit submit.

IMPORTANT DATES

December 20	WINTER BREAK
January 4	SCHOOLS REOPEN
February 18	DISTRICT PRO D
March 21 –	
April 1	SPRING VACATION
April 4	SCHOOLS REOPEN
April 21	DISTRICT PRO D
April 22	GOOD FRIDAY
April 25	EASTER MONDAY
May 23	VICTORIA DAY
June 30	SCHOOLS CLOSE

A Message from the District Administrator: Laurie Ebenal

Indigenous storytelling is a "sacred" process and considered the soul of Indigenous People. Without a written language, traditional culture and customs were handed down using oral narratives, and connected the entire community, present and past.

Storytelling is part of the fabric of many cultures. We weave our stories together to create a tapestry of our lives. Without storytelling we lose our "cultural grounding".

No matter what our spiritual beliefs, or what part of the world we live, we all share stories.

A tradition I like to share is from the Seneca, a tribe that was part of the Iroquois Confederacy. The Seneca divided the year into four seasons which coincide with the "current" calendar. The Seneca New Year was believed to be celebrated in the spring, but after contact with the Europeans, they began to celebrate it around the time of the Winter Solstice, as we do today.

The Winter Solstice was considered a very "powerful" day, as it is the longest night of the year. A time of magic and mystery. I know this time of year holds special meaning for everyone.

The Aboriginal Department would like to take this opportunity to extend warm wishes at this special time of year. We trust old and new stories will be shared during the "holiday season".



GRADUATION 2011

This February will be the start of the 7th Annual Grad Scarf workshop. Each year our program invites all graduating students to design their own "original" scarf to wear with their cap and gown at Commencement. Invitations to all Aboriginal graduating students will be sent out in January.

As in past years, the workshop will be held at Dr Charles Best Secondary, each Monday evening for ten weeks. Youth Workers Carrie Clark, Gena Sanderson, and Teacher Denise Nembhard will be on hand to assist students to create this beautiful piece of wearable art. It is something they will be able to wear with pride for a lifetime.

If you would like more information, or would like to pre-register, please call Carrie Clark at 604.945.7386. Check out our website photos for more photos.



ORAL LANGUAGE TRAINING—Grade 2 Students

In keeping with School District #43 (Coquitlam) goals, early identification of children who may require some language support will occur through a screening of the student's oral language skills. Oral language skills are essential to educational success, and language demands increase as a child progresses through school. It is important to make sure that children have the basic language skills they need in primary years.

Throughout the fall and winter, Dawn Sasges, our Registered Speech-Language Pathologist will be conducting screenings of all Grade 2 children in the Aboriginal Education Program. Children will be screened on an individual basis at their school. Each screening will take about 30 minutes. If you have a child in Grade 2 for the 2010/2011 school year, the Aboriginal Education Department will be contacting you.

Parents will be notified if the screening indicates their child may benefit from a period of intervention/support. If you would like more information, or do not wish to have your child participate, please contact Laurie Ebenal, District Administrator at 604.945.7386.

ME2WE

Free the Children's *Me2We* Day is more than a day of celebration and inspiration. It is part of a year-long program that was created to celebrate the power of young people to create positive change in the world. *Me2We Day* features speeches and performances from both social activists and political leaders as well as cultural icons and performers.

This year the Aboriginal Education Department was able to take four students from Moody Middle. This amazing event enhances the learning outcomes of the Leadership program, and the students are busy working on fundraising activities for the community. Presenters at this year's program included: Ethan Zohn (winner of TV Show Survivor, co-founder of Grassroot Soccer); Hedley (multi-platinum recording artists); Martin Sheen (Emmy and Golden Globe winner); and Michel Chickwanine (former child soldier and *Me2We* motivational Speaker) to name a few.

First Nations Studies 12

Did you know that B.C. students can enroll in First Nations Studies 12 instead of Socials 11, and receive graduation credit? The focus of the course is an exploration of the diverse territories, languages, cultures, education and history of B.C.'s First People. It connects current issues with past history. Topics include: relationship with nature and the land; impact of contact, religion, and colonialism including the Métis people, oral tradition, arts and literature; Aboriginal leadership, identity, and self-determination.

Currently, Coquitlam School District offers two First Nations Studies 12 classes at Terry Fox Secondary, one class at Centennial Secondary, and one online-blended delivery class through Coquitlam Open Learning. Talk to your child's school counsellor, or email Wendy Hawkin at Aboriginal Education for more information: whawkin@sd43.bc.ca

The Rights of a Child Commemorated in Glass by Students at Cape Horn Elementary



Last year, our Artist-in-Residence, Dawn Brown, worked with six students at Cape Horn Elementary to create glass panels that illustrate the Rights of the Child. What follows is what Dawn says she learned from the children:

"I sat with the six students last year and we talked about what they know about A Child's Rights. The first things I thought of were respect, love, compassion, and generosity. This is what I saw in the students. They wanted the trust, the love, and the respect—they also wanted longer lunch breaks, longer recess, and later bed times; but aside from the fun they were very grown up with what they saw as A Child's Right. With all the ceremonies aside, the students showed me that, as with any human society anywhere on the Earth Mother, we have the basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, and security. They also reminded me that we adults need to be more grown up and respect everything more than we do. With my time with the students I was reminded that, all of us must try to remember it's about the bigger picture, that we are given assurances that no matter how good or bad we are, no matter how happy or sad we are, we have to remember we are all children of the earth, our Earth Mother....that she gives us all that she has and we must try to do the same. With this, the students trusted that I could draw what they saw in their mind's eye and a relationship was born. The drawings were accepted by the students. They set up, prepped, and cut the glass, and their names live on each glass panel with their words and thoughts, as a child's right forever.

EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO PLAY AND IMAGINE by MADISON

EVERY CHILD HAS RIGHT TO TRUST THEIR WISDOM AND ROOTS by KAISHIA

EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION by WALEED

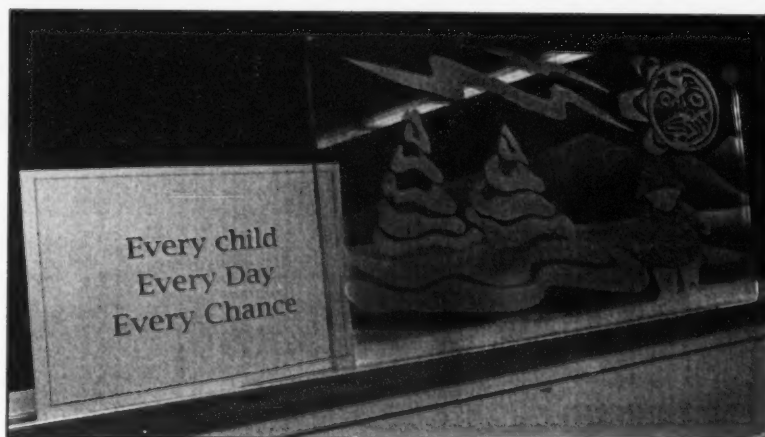
EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO FOOD AND THEIR IMAGINATION by JULIANO

EVERY CHILD EVERY CHANCE EVERY DAY by FREDDIE

EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO BE SEEN AND HEARD by DANIELLA

This year at The Convention of the Rights of the Child, two more glass panels were created by Aboriginal students, Brianna and Klæe.

Both panels were gifted: one to the United Nations offices in Vancouver, and the other to the United Nations offices in Ottawa.



Ida visits at Westwood Elementary

A wonderful doll is currently visiting with teacher, Amy Schmidt and her grade 3/4 class at Westwood Elementary.

Ida began traveling in British Columbia in January 2009. The Ida Program was created by the Cariboo-Chilcotin Circle of Change, a Canadian Mental Health Association group, who is dedicated to eliciting positive change and cultural awareness by creating a "culture" of understanding and acceptance of others.

Ida travels in a little red suitcase, along with a scrapbook where the grade 4 students document their classroom/community culture; a letter to the teacher and students from Ida; My Ancestors and Me worksheet, and a curriculum that is designed to create discussion about the various cultures of the students and their ancestors. Strategies include maps, games, activities, sharing, and classroom discussions.

When Ida arrives at a new school, she brings a "Pay It Forward" gift from the previous school. This has proven to be a popular part of Ida's teaching, as the kids love the idea so much, some of the students have continued on with Pay It Forward gifts or acts of kindness even after Ida has gone on to the next school.

Ida Turner (1906-1996) created the doll, who is now owned by Darlene Daskoch. Next fall, Ida will be traveling to Oklahoma to visit the descendants of her creator, Ida Turner, and then off across Canada.

Ida will move shortly to Glen Elementary where she will visit the classroom of Frankie Bovold and her students.

Meanwhile, the students at Westwood Elementary (below) are thrilled by her visit.



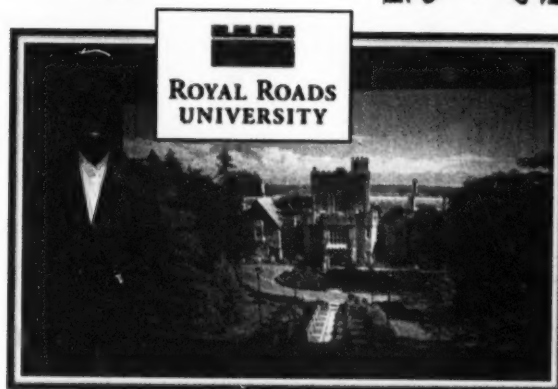
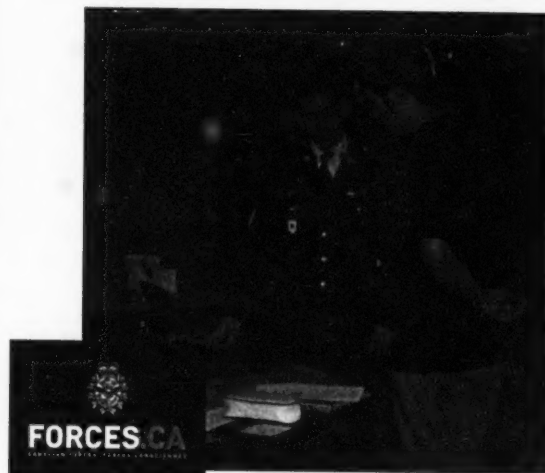
Post-Secondary Career Fair

Aboriginal students from all our secondary schools, as well as CAFE and GOAL, visited with reps at our Post-Secondary Career Fair on December 1, 2010 at Riverside Secondary School. Representatives and advisors from major universities and colleges attended along with CN, London Drugs, the Canadian Forces, the RCMP, Katimavik Youth Volunteer Program, Coquitlam Open Learning Secondary School Apprenticeships, Access Trades, and ITA (the Industry Training Authority).

Almost fifty students won gifts donated by the reps, and gained invaluable information and advice on how to explore and proceed with their dream careers. The event was a great success and we look forward to many more meetings with our partners in learning.

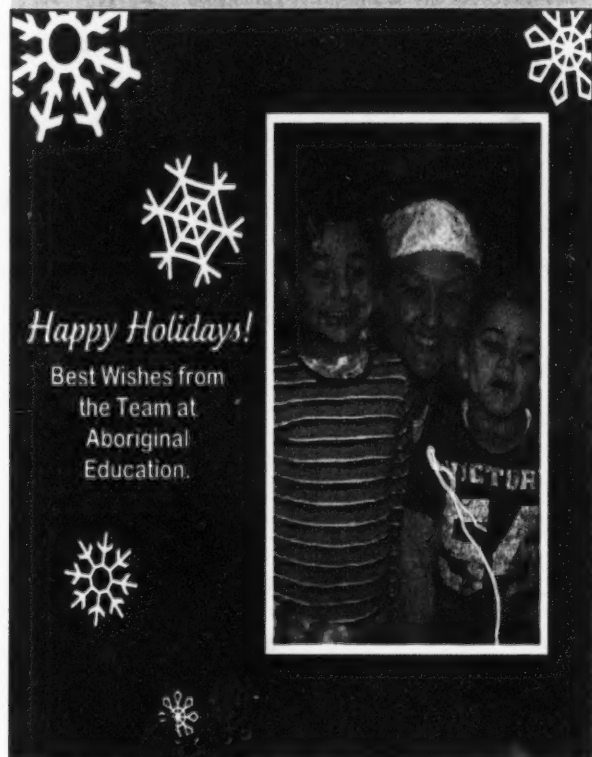


Aboriginal Resource teacher, Terri-Mae Galligos with Allan Frank from Vancouver Community College and (below) Gary McDermott from the Industry Training Authority.



For information email Wendy Hawkin at Aboriginal Education (whawkin@sd43.bc.ca).

Annual Christmas Party at Aboriginal Education



Around 200 people celebrated with us at our Aboriginal Education Christmas party this year. Families enjoyed an evening of crafts, games, appetizers, refreshments, desserts, and even a visit from Santa! If you missed this year's event, remember to join us next year. We wish much happiness, joy, and success in the coming New Year.